



June 23, 2020

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol Building, 1st Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Toni Atkins
Senate President pro Tempore
State Capitol Building, Room 205
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Anthony Rendon
Assembly Speaker
State Capitol Building, Room 219
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Safety Net Funding/Realignment Backfill – Support

Dear Governor Newsom, Pro Tem Atkins, and Speaker Rendon:

Counties are in strong support of the inclusion of funding for safety net services in the final budget agreement and write to thank you for your leadership and agreement to prioritize preservation of the state's safety net. The \$1 billion that is being provided as a Realignment backfill, with \$250 million of that total dependent upon additional federal funding, will help prevent devastating cuts to the health and human services, entitlement programs, and programs that serve vulnerable populations that counties administer on behalf of the state.

The COVID-19 pandemic is far from over and we know that both the state and counties will continue facing increased service demands and costs to respond to the pandemic, while our budgets suffer from declining revenues. Counties are facing an overall Realignment revenue decline of \$3.3 billion in the current year and budget year, and we are grateful for the up to \$1 billion Realignment backfill. We appreciate your recognition that these services are facing extreme cuts and that there can be no economic recovery without a strong safety net. With this funding, counties will be able to prevent the most severe cuts to these vital safety net programs.

We also know that additional federal COVID-19 relief is essential to California's recovery. Counties remain committed to advocating in partnership with the state to ask Congress and the federal Administration to provide additional funding.

Thank you again for the inclusion of this funding in the final budget agreement that strengthens the state and county partnership in protecting our most vulnerable residents during this time of great need.

Respectfully,



Graham Knaus
Executive Director, California State Association of Counties



Kelly Brooks-Lindsey
Legislative Advocate, Urban Counties of California



Paul Smith
Vice President, Government Affairs, Rural County Representatives of California

cc: The Honorable Holly Mitchell, Chair, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
The Honorable Phil Ting, Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
Keely Bosler, Director, Department of Finance
Anthony Williams, Legislative Affairs Secretary, Office of Governor Newsom
Honorable Members, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Honorable Members, Assembly Budget Committee
Chris Woods, Office of the Senate President pro Tempore
Jason Sisney, Office of the Assembly Speaker
Joe Stephenshaw, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
Christian Griffith, Assembly Budget Committee
Gabriel Petek, Legislative Analyst's Office